

HOUSE BILL NO. 233

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES NELSON, Kaufman, Carpenter, Rasmussen, Vance, Gillham

Introduced: 1/18/22

Referred: State Affairs, Judiciary

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to religious services during disasters; and providing for an effective
2 date."

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** AS 26.23.020 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

5 (l) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, if the governor issues
6 an order, proclamation, or regulation under this chapter that designates any service or
7 activity as essential, the order, proclamation, or regulation must also designate
8 religious services as essential.

9 * **Sec. 2.** AS 26.23.040(a) is amended to read:

10 (a) The Alaska division of homeland security and emergency management
11 shall prepare and maintain a state emergency plan and keep the plan [IT] current. **If**
12 **the plan designates any service or activity as essential, the plan must also**
13 **designate religious services as essential.** The plan may include provisions for

14 (1) prevention and minimization of injury and damage caused by

1 disasters;

2 (2) prompt and effective response to disasters;

3 (3) emergency relief;

4 (4) identification of geographical areas, municipalities, cities, and
5 [OR] villages especially vulnerable to a disaster;

6 (5) recommendations for

7 (A) zoning, building, and other land use controls;

8 (B) safety measures for securing mobile homes or other
9 nonpermanent or semi-permanent structures; and

10 (C) other preventive and preparedness measures designed to
11 eliminate or reduce disasters or their impact;

12 (6) assistance to local officials in designing local emergency action
13 plans;

14 (7) authorization and procedures for the construction of temporary
15 works designed to protect against or mitigate danger, damage, or loss from a disaster;

16 (8) organization of manpower and chains of command;

17 (9) coordination of federal, state, and local disaster activities;

18 (10) coordination of the state emergency plan with the disaster plans of
19 the federal government; and

20 (11) other matters necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

21 * **Sec. 3.** AS 26.23.060(e) is amended to read:

22 (e) Each political subdivision shall ensure that a written local or
23 interjurisdictional disaster emergency plan for its area is prepared, maintained, and
24 distributed to all appropriate officials. The disaster emergency plan must

25 (1) include a clear and complete statement of the emergency
26 responsibilities of all local agencies and officials;

27 (2) designate religious services as essential if the plan designates
28 any other service or activity as essential.

29 * **Sec. 4.** AS 26.23.900 is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

30 (10) "religious services" means rituals, worship, counseling, or
31 ceremonies performed as part of religious observation or by a religious leader.

1 * **Sec. 5.** This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).